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shows that the writer is equally free from the rawness which is ignorant of, and the impudence which disregards, those rules of society which have authority in no one country, but which belong to the law of nations, and are founded in a universal sense of right.

4. — *Lectures on Modern History, from the Irruption of the Northern Nations to the Close of the American Revolution.* By WILLIAM SMYTH, Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge. From the Second London Edition, with a *Preface, List of Books on American History, &c.* By JARED SPARKS, LL. D., Professor of Ancient and Modern History in the University of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Cambridge: John Owen. 2 vols. 8vo. 1841.

WE are glad to see an American edition of this work, which, whether we regard the topics treated, the manner of the discussion, or the ability, judgment, and liberal spirit of the author, is certainly one of the best that have recently appeared. In fact, we know of no work in the language of a similar character. Fully aware of the want, which students and readers of history have hitherto felt, of some guide by which they may select the best authorities and form a proper estimate of the comparative importance of periods and events, Professor Smyth has conceived and carried out a plan for supplying this want in the study of modern history. His purpose is to teach how history should be read; to show the way, and furnish lights for pursuing it. In this purpose he has been eminently successful.

Each lecture embraces some general topic, some prominent period of history, to which his attention is chiefly drawn, descending to details only so far as they are requisite to illustrate the higher points of his subject. His method is natural and clear; his remarks are often profound, always judicious and temperate; and his views of men and society are of that cheerful and liberal cast, which convinces the reader at every step, that they proceed from a fair mind and a generous spirit. His style and his manner of thinking harmonize with each other; they are both characterized by simplicity, directness, and vigor. However grave his subject, however cumbersome or dry in its matter, he seldom fails to set it in an attractive light, thereby communicating pleasure with in-

struction. Every page affords a proof, that he writes from a full mind, that his researches have been thorough, and that his facts are drawn from the most authentic sources. His opinions and reflections, at the same time that they are bold and decided, are uttered without ostentation, and with such obvious justice and freedom from prejudice, as not only to inspire confidence in their accuracy, but the highest respect for the lecturer's candor and benevolence.

"His plan," says Professor Sparks, in the Preface to the present edition, "restricts him to a general survey, without the detail of narrative, or elaborate discussions of complicated and doubtful questions, which, however necessary they may sometimes be in a regular historical composition, are frequently more cumbersome than convincing, more tedious than instructive. His work embraces Modern History. As preparatory to his main subject, he touches upon the period immediately following the downfall of the Roman Empire; the laws, customs, and political state of the barbarous nations of Europe; the principal features of the Mahometan religion, and the remarkable events of the Dark Ages. In this outline he confines himself to such particulars, as mark the progress of civilization, and open the way to the political organizations of modern Europe, and as explain the causes of those vast changes in the affairs of the world, which have taken place within the last three hundred years. These changes and their consequences are made the theme of his subsequent lectures. Proceeding in the same spirit of philosophical analysis, seizing upon the prominent events and pursuing them in their natural course, and through their intricate combinations, he examines under separate heads the history of the European nations. Yet the periods and the states, which pass in review before him, are not considered as detached from each other, but as parts of a general system, having their distinctive relations and uniting to constitute a whole.

"A large portion of the work is devoted to England; the origin of the British constitution, the vicissitudes it has undergone, the dangers it has encountered, the obstacles it has overcome, and the means by which it has advanced to be the consolidating principle of an empire vast in territory and power. The great struggle, which long existed between the prerogative and popular claims, before the balance was duly adjusted by securing the weight of an efficient Parliament, is fully investigated and clearly explained. The characters of British statesmen, and their influence on the history of their country and the growth of its institutions, are likewise discussed with a freedom and ability, which clothe the author's remarks on these subjects with peculiar interest. Nor does he speak of the eminent men of other countries with less candor or discrimination, assigning to all their just meed of praise or censure, according as they have been the benefactors of their race, ambitious demagogues, or the tools of despotism." — pp. viii. ix.

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"The portion of the work, which will be most likely to interest readers on this side of the Atlantic, is the last six lectures, in which

he speaks of the American Revolution. No British writer has treated this subject with so much candor, or such perfect freedom from party feelings and national prejudice; and it may at least be doubted, if any American writer can claim, on this score, a higher degree of confidence. The fault of ignorance, so justly ascribed to almost all the writers in England, who have touched on that event, cannot be laid to the charge of Professor Smyth. He has examined the American side with no less diligence than the English. He has drawn from original fountains, consulted public documents, and taken as his guides Washington's official letters, Marshall, and Ramsay, whose authority he respects and in whose representations he confides. The causes of the controversy are briefly stated. Without laboring to decide whether these causes justified the measures of the British ministry in strictness of law and constitutional right, he allows, what is now assented to by all the world, that both ministers and people suffered themselves to be led astray by a mistaken policy in the first instance, and by national pride to the end of the contest. Mild government is a maxim, which Professor Smyth inculcates throughout his lectures, and which he especially urges upon every sovereign power in regard to its colonies or dependent states. This maxim is strikingly illustrated by the parallel he draws between the Netherlands, shaking off the yoke of Spain, and the American colonies, asserting and maintaining their independence. The pride of Spain was tyrannical, and she lost the Netherlands; the pride of England was blind and obstinate, and she lost her colonies. A little yielding to circumstances would have saved both. It was easy to cry out faction, treason, and rebellion, and thus to kindle irritation on one side and a rancorous spirit on the other, till the breach was past healing; but it was not easy to conquer a people borne down by wrongs, which they were determined to redress. Their hearts might have been subdued and their affections won, not by coercion and harshness, but by mild treatment and a due regard to their rights. This truth, deduced from the two cases in question, is confirmed by so many examples in history, that rulers might long ago have learned from it a practical lesson of policy and interest, to say nothing of wisdom and duty.

"The conduct of both parties in carrying on the American war is freely canvassed by the author. He finds little to praise in the British counsels, and some things to blame in those of the Americans. He wonders, and rightly enough, that there should be so much patriotism in passing resolves and publishing addresses, and so little in paying taxes and furnishing supplies for the army. He is surprised at the readiness to contract debts for the public benefit, and at the reluctance to recognise and provide for them. The soldiers, who had fought the battles and secured the freedom of their country, were dismissed and sent home without even a promise that they should be paid. But he justly accounts for these inconsistencies, and some others, by the weakness of the executive power. Congress could debate, resolve, and recommend, and here their functions ended. As an executive body they were feeble, in fact powerless, in regard to the most important objects of government. Nevertheless, it argues much for the virtue of a people, that they could sustain a war for so long a time under such a system. It argues more; it proves the strength of

principle with which they were united, and a deep-rooted conviction of the justice of their cause, that they could be roused to such efforts and sacrifices through years of conflict, privation, and suffering."—pp. xv. — xvii.

Professor Sparks has also enriched the present edition with a full list of the best works relating to the History of the United States and of the several States, to the American Revolution, and to the Constitution of the Federal Government.

It is due to the publisher to notice particularly the beautiful typographical execution of these volumes, which compares well with the best English work.

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5. — *A Grammar of the Greek Language. Part First. A Practical Grammar of the Æolic and Common Dialects, with the Elements of General Grammar.* By ALPHEUS CROSBY, Professor of the Greek Language and Literature in Dartmouth College. Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 1841. 12mo. pp. 239.

PROFESSOR Crosby's high reputation as a classical scholar will be sustained and advanced by the publication of this work. It is not a mere compilation from other grammars, a pouring out of one vessel into another, after the manner in which many of the new manuals of instruction are now produced. If we were not almost afraid to characterize a Greek grammar by such a word as *originality*, we should say, that this quality was manifested in an eminent degree in the treatise now before us. We do not mean, merely a novel arrangement of parts, or a new and felicitous use of language in giving prominence and clearness to principles, that, in themselves, were previously well established; although in these two respects, the work has much merit. But it bears the marks, throughout, of profound reflection and original research. And the task is performed not in the sapless manner of a mere philologist, who has lost all general ideas, while employed in hunting up words, breathings, and accents. The writer has a hearty love of his subject, and a power of viewing it in all its bearings and relations. The work is comprehensive, at the same time that it is condensed, and the general scholar will find ample matter for consideration in it, as well as the student of Greek.

We will not affirm, that a desire of change has led to a